

Prayer Updates from Mariannridge

South Africa DECEMBER 2025

We rejoice as we approach the end of another year, God has been good and in so many ways he has answered our prayers, and so we give thanks for our friends who have upheld us in your prayers and take this opportunity to share a few updates as we journey to the close of the year. Many of our prayers are focused on the results of the 2025 school –year.

Joy to the World



Prayers

SCHOOLING

The local schools are very crowded; in some instances (even in the lower grades) the classes are crowded with chronic disciplinary problems. These problems are exacerbated by language barriers in the classrooms : English and Zulu. According to some learners there are teachers who cannot speak English and hence the learners struggle to understand the lessons. Please pray as follows :

Family of Thando : a secondary school learner who took his own life as a result of not being promoted. A second learner, Sfundo, attempted suicide from an over-dose of tablets, he is critically ill in hospital.

Please pray.

Brett : a regular member of the youth; he and his family claim the school did not issue accurate school reports and he should be promoted. There are many reports of a similar nature; pray for calm and wisdom as these families approach the school next year. Rumours of strike action by parents early next year are circulating.

Grade 9 / 10 : there are many reports of a huge failure rate in these two grades, which implies many will not be returning to school next year, adding to the numbers who are unemployed, with social implications, viz crime and increased poverty, etc which already plagues this community

Grade R 2026 : the Grade R classes are similarly crowded in the primary school; many families have been turned away from the school, and referred to our Candyfloss Grade R, while this is good news, many families cannot afford to pay our school fees; pray for wisdom and guidance. The Grade R year is compulsory in South Africa.

Ashlyn (and Tyrick) : both were unable to complete their primary schooling; no high schools are able to accept them; the social workers cannot place them; Ashlyn has been offered an opportunity to do a skills training programme in, *inter alia* welding, however, these courses are fee-paying; mother, and family cannot afford these fees as a result of unemployment; pray for wisdom and guidance.

Bereavement

Levi and Tyrick (14) (see above) : as per Prayer Updates in October Ruben Whyte, who was senselessly attacked by assailants with a knife subsequently passed away in hospital. Pray particularly for Tyrick who

complains bitterly that they not only lost a father, but he was the bread-winner. Give thanks for Levi's stance not to pursue revenge action, when approached by members of a local gang. I can see the hand of God in this decision stemming from our Bible studies. Praise God for their faith!

Unemployment

Tyron, Joseph, Troy, Dylan, and others (the bando) : the problems of poor (or incomplete) schooling plus the high rate of unemployment, especially youth unemployment is a very big concern; parents are notoriously absent or don't exist at all. There are daily calls from the "bando", for food. The problem of eating is a very big problem in the community which cannot be under-stated; only God knows the answer. We assisted Tyron with a food parcel today, I commented, "You have food for today and tomorrow, but what about the next meal?" Tyron shrugged and merely commented 'I don't know!' This is painfully common, just enough for one day; please pray, only God knows the answers.

Conclusion

These are but a few salient stories struggles and daily battles for food and shelter; most of the above prayer requests emanate from the immediate pastoral contacts from within this church, however, they are replicated again and again in the community, with one major difference, the firm resolve of our members (especially the young adults) not to resort to crime, drugs and loan sharks (if we, the church, and the families don't or can't help, in desperation it may become a bigger problem of loan-shark debt and life-threatening action, if they can't repay). The only answer lies in an unwavering confidence that God will provide. Pray that those who are hungry will not succumb to the temptations of resorting to crime, loan sharks and other risky actions.

In the midst of the struggles we find in our broken communities the prophet Isaiah echoes words of hope in those amazing and life-giving words of prophecy

**For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Isaiah 7

As we approach the Christmas celebrations we are reminded that one of the central themes of Christmas is JOY; however, please remember this community in your prayers, that the interpretation of JOY over the festive week-end will not be interpreted as the free-flow of alcohol, often resulting in violence, and in particular gender-based violence, together with an upsurge of crime, and the discharging of the many unlicensed fire – arms in the community. May we all, wherever we are living know the Peace of the Christ Child in our hearts, as we celebrate with our families and loved ones.

God bless you for reading these brief Prayer Updates, and your prayers.
I thank you one and all for journeying with us this year!

Grace and peace

